Khenchen Jigme Phuntsok Series
The Heart Essence: My Heart's Advice

by Kyabje Khenchen Jigme Phuntsok

1. May the youthful sun of speech, Mañjuśrī, in his enlightened form, With its signs and marks, embodying the secret body, speech and mind Of all the infinite buddhas and their bodhisattva heirs, Turn your minds towards the path to perfect awakening!

2. There are countless Dharma teachings, profound and extensive, Suited to the mental capacities and inclinations of limitless beings, Yet, by gathering all the key points together in a way that can be practised, I offer this pithy advice to you, my friends, who are as dear as my own heart.

3. Becoming attached to this life, you'll lose your fortunate connection to the Dharma. By indulging your desires again and again, your craving will only increase, And you'll never find satisfaction. Wealth, happiness, fame and praise—To pursue them is like buying and selling in a dream: let go of such concerns!

4. By relying on genuine, qualified spiritual teachers, Your virtuous qualities will develop and increase, And all your faults and failings will be cast away, So serve them in the three ways,¹ and accomplish others’ aims.

5. Just as gardens are not to be found growing in midair, All the bounties of the higher realms and liberation, Will never be yours as long as you lack moral discipline, So with mindfulness, awareness and caution, control your mind.

6. Up to now, you have wandered as if crazy and without a guide, Through the vast darkness of unknowing in beginningless existence. So now, in order to find the great palace of peace and happiness, It’s right that you take joy in studying the ocean-like teachings.

7. Yet hearing alone will not be enough to eliminate misconceptions, And confidence in the teacher and teachings will not come easily, So, through a hundred forms of debating, explaining and composing, Gather the elixir of mind that is the wisdom born of reflection.
8. Even the most erudite of teachers with vast scriptural learning,  
   Can repeat words like a parrot, without taking them to heart,  
   But when death suddenly arrives, this will only bring regret,  
   So rely on the essential meaning of the teachings, my heart-friends!

9. All the infinite teachings of the buddhas, so vast in number,  
   Are imparted purely as a means to subdue our own mind.  
   Don’t put your faith in words alone! I urge you once again:  
   Let the key points of the deeper meaning seep into your hearts!

10. This physical existence is difficult to find, like an udumbara flower,  
    Yet more rewarding than the discovery of a million precious gems.  
    To find an opportunity like this again in future will be difficult indeed,  
    So don’t let it pass without accomplishing the highest of all aims!

11. Our great enemy, the lord of death, arrives like lightning from the sky,  
   And nobody can predict when and where he will strike next.  
   So you can ill afford to be idle, waiting months or even years.  
   Now, right now, is the time for virtuous Dharma practice!

12. For all beings, actions will not go to waste, but will bear fruit,  
    And when karma ripens, there’s no way to change its outcome.  
    So now, while you’re fortunate enough to have some influence,  
    If you still insist on deceiving yourself, who then will protect you!

13. If merely thinking about saṃsāra’s various sufferings,  
    Which are unbearably intense, causes you to shudder,  
    Ask yourself: What will it be like when body and mind  
    Actually undergo these countless forms of duḥkha?

14. Only they have the power to lead us from this great terror,  
    So extremely difficult to escape: no one else could ever save us!  
    So we should take these three most precious jewels as our refuge,  
    For they are infallible, wise, compassionate, and powerful.

15. All the three worlds' misery comes from wanting happiness for ourselves,  
    And all virtue and happiness is born of a mind that wishes others well.  
    So, following the example of the teacher of all gods and human beings,  
    Generate the supreme mind that is set upon unsurpassed awakening.

16. When the crystal mirror of your own mind is covered completely  
    With the thick layer of dust that is the adventitious defilements,  
    It's difficult for the reflection of profound, clear samādhi to appear,  
    So strive to clean it with the pure cloth of confession’s four powers.
17. All sights, sound and awareness are deity, mantra and dharmatā, And knowing that this is how it has always been is the view, Without losing sight of this, take aim with meditation's arrow, And master the activities of eliminating harm and providing care.

18. If you can generate bliss, clarity and non-thought as means of support, Through the techniques of breathing and adopting physical postures, You will come to master the illusory body of clear light, So it's right that you allow the perfection stage to penetrate your mind.

19. At this time, when the darkness of the five degenerations prevails, It is hard for the starlight of the eight lower yānas to banish it. So shine the light of the Nyingtik sun with its hundred thousand rays, All drawn along by the swift carriage of the three kinds of faith!

20. Whatever arises, in pure awareness, unaltered and unconfined, Look into the mind that settles by itself, resting naturally. If you recognize the natural clarity, always empty and without origin, You'll traverse at once the paths and stages, and capture the fruition.

21. While leaving things just as they are, if, through the right postures and gazes, You experience naturally manifesting space and light-spheres as pure awareness, Then dualistic perception, samsāra's darkness, will disappear in all-pervading space, And, perfecting the four visions, you'll achieve a body of light, the great transference.

22. What I have said here—this plain talk arranged in verses—is my heart’s advice. Although it lacks the poetic turns of phrase that might delight the intellectuals, As a spontaneous, unaltered outpouring from the depths of my mind, It is in the preferred style of the vidyādharas of the Early Translations.

23. Through the merit of this, may all beings without exception Gain perfect sovereignty over the kingdom of the four kāyas, And may I too never be separated, even for a moment, From the fortitude of Mañjuśrī, the ever youthful!

This was composed spontaneously in China, at the solitary place of Wu Tai Shan (The Five-Peaked Mountain), on the peak upon which the supreme deity, the youthful Mañjuśrī, turned the wheel of the profound and vast Dharma for tens of thousands of bodhisattvas, by Ngawang Lodrö Tsungme (Khenchen Jigme Phuntsok) who set down
in twenty-three minutes all that came to mind. May it be virtuous!

Translated by Adam Pearcey, Rigpa Translations, 2005, revised 2015. Thanks to Lama Chökyi Nyima for his kind assistance and to Matthew Pistono for his encouragement.

1. Offering material support, attending the master and practising meditation. ⇩
The Song of Devotion

Verses of Aspiration for the Fulfilment of the Enlightened Vision of Khenchen Jikmé Phuntsok, the Reincarnation of Tertön Lerab Lingpa

by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

O lord of sages, Shakyamuni, who through abandoning and realizing attained supreme buddhahood,

With your hearts sons, Lord Maitreya and Mañjughaśa,

The seven patriarchs, the seventeen great panditas and the like,

All you great founders of the teachings in the noble land of India,

And especially you who introduced the excellent path in Tibet;

The three ancestral Dharma kings,

The second buddha—Padmakara,
Shantarakshita and your entire lineage: recollecting your kindness fills us with faith and devotion.

So as to bring living inspiration to countless beings, you spread the teachings of Buddha, our victorious guide endowed with four-fold fearlessness, radiating them, with the five perfections, to fortunate disciples in every direction, O learned, skilful and noble lama, to you we pray.

When the time came for the enlightened aspiration and actions Of the Dalai Lama Thubten Gyatso to be fulfilled, it was through their spiritual link That Lerab Lingpa, with his cycle of teachings, Brought a wealth of auspiciousness to the people of the Land of Snows.

Even amidst the oppressive darkness of the five degenerations, You perfected your study, contemplation and meditation on all the outer and inner pitakas, and countless scriptures,
 Reached the highest experience and realization of their meaning,

And stood out, as the supreme holder of the definitive teachings.

When the fierce winds of change blew with unbearable intensity,

Your determination and resolve remained steadfast like the king of mountains,

And those in saffron robes, upholders of the three trainings,

And devoted followers in their thousands, flocked around you.

Day by day, by means of their study, practice and spiritual activity,

You fulfilled the deepest wishes of beings who came from far and wide,

And with a great Dharma rain of ripening empowerments and liberating teachings, vast and profound,

You planted the perfect seed of enlightenment within us all.

From the teachings of the shravakas up to Atiyoga,
You bestowed the scriptural traditions of all the vehicles,

Along with every drop of nectar from the pith instructions,

And satisfied the hearts of all your fortunate disciples.

How clearly we recall the mandala of your perfect form,

How distinct the deep melody of your enlightened speech,

How vivid the knowledge and affection of your wisdom mind,

Remembering all your noble qualities, fervently we pray to you.

All of us who are your followers, we pledge

With unwavering effort, to apply faith, diligence and critical intelligence

To the wish-granting Dharma treasury of the nine vehicles,

And to devote ourselves, always, to the practice of contemplation and meditation.
Through the power of this prayer to you, our protector, may all your aspirations

Be perfectly realized, and so bring inspiration to beings throughout the whole of space,

And may we all never be separated from the teachers of the supreme vehicle,

So that we cultivate completely the qualities of experience and realization.

Through the vast and compassionate blessings of the lamas, yidams and dakinis,

Through the power of interdependence, the nature of things, which is beyond all imagining,

And through the strength of unchanging and fervent devotion in both teacher and students,

May these aspirations come to pass, just as we desire!
Khenpo Jikmé Phuntsok Rinpoche gave immense service to the Buddha’s precious doctrine of scripture and realization in both teaching and practice, and he clarified the teachings of the Ancient Translation school as his enlightened aspirations and prayers from the past came to maturation. In his noble activity, he greatly benefited the teachings and beings by turning the wheel of Dharma extensively and in a non-sectarian way, affecting many thousands of devoted followers in a number of countries around the world through his wonderful aspirations and enlightened deeds, but especially at the Larung Institute for Higher Buddhist Studies which he founded in Serta, East Tibet.

At this unfortunate time, when he has displayed the appearance of directing his wisdom mind into the dharmadhatu as a result of some external and internal adversities, it is extremely important for his grief-stricken disciples to pray one-pointedly to their great teacher and to make an offering of their practice by diligently applying themselves continuously and without hypocrisy, as well as by keeping in their hearts his essential instructions that distil the essence of sutra and mantra, and not forgetting them.

So that the enlightened intentions of this great being may be fulfilled completely and to help dispel the anguish of his disciples, I recently made this prayer. May all these aspirations be fulfilled!

This was written by the Buddhist monk Tenzin Gyatso on the fifteenth day of the first month of the Wood Monkey year (6th March 2004) during the seventeenth calendrical cycle. May virtue abound!


3. ↑ The Kings Songtsen Gampo, Trisong Detsen and Ralpachen.